DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 288 075 CE 049 014

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TITLE	Teaching Units for ESL: American Holidays. A 310 Project for the State of New Mexico.
SPONS AGENCY	New Mexico State Dept. of Education, Santa Fe.
PUB DATE	85
NOTE	105p.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Basic Education; Adult Literacy; Classroom Techniques; Cultural Activities; *Cultural Context; Educational Resources; *English (Second Language); Films; *Holidays; Lesson Plans; Literacy Education; *Reading Instruction; *Second Language Instruction; Teaching Methods; Units of Study
IDENTIFIERS	310 Project; *New Mexico; *United States

ABSTRACT

This set of teaching suggestions and reading passages is intended primarily to teach students of English as a second language (ESL) about American holidays. An attempt was made to make the units useful for speakers of many languages, rather than primarily one language group. Some foreign holidays the students will encounter in New Mexico (such as Cinco de Mayo) also have been included. The units are divided into two sections--beginning and advanced, and the reading passages may also be used with beginning readers. The suggestions include word patterns to be used with the beginning passages. The booklet also includes a glossary and a list of suggested films. (KC)

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Teaching Units for ESL:
American Holidays
A 310 project for the state of New Mexico

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Introduction

This set of teaching suggestions and reading passages is primarily to teach students of English as a foreign language about American holidays. An attempt has been made to make the units useful for speakers of many languages, rather than primarily one language group. Some foreign holidays the students will encounter in New Mexico, such as Cinco de Mayo, have also been included. The units are divided into two sections - advanced beginning and advanced and the reading passages may also be used with beginning readers. The suggestions include word patterns to be used with the beginning passages. To use the word patterns, start with a word of two or three letters and change the first letter. (Example: cot, dot, got, hot, lot, not, pot, rot, sot, tot) Pronounce each word as you write it on the board. Be sure you can define any words you use.

The teacher's suggestions are just that - suggestions. Teachers may wish to change discussion topics to fit their teaching style and students. A further suggestion is that teachers obtain a tape of songs or movies appropriate to each holiday for students to hear and see.

It is our feeling that the first passage in each section is important. These passages are designed to introduce holidays in general and national holidays specifically. It is important for students to understand what to expect on these holidays - that many businesses, all government offices, banks, and post offices will be closed.

The glossary is not intended to take the place of class demonstrations or samples. Many of the words, especially in the advanced beginning section of the glossary, are much better understood if demonstrated or illustrated with pictures. Examples are telephone, start, stop.

We have enjoyed developing and pretesting these units. Students have actively participated in the discussions and enjoyed them. Teachers can have really good sessions with with some of these holidays by encouraging students to talk about their own traditions.

The publication of this book is funded through an ABE/310 grant from the New Mexico Department of Education, Vocational-Technical and Adult Education.

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Holidays

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Take a calendar and show students how dates and days of the week are shown on it.

2. Use the calendar to show students how the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Mondays and Thursdays are found. Explain that many holidays occur on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th Mondays. Thanksgiving is on the 4th Thursday of November.

3. Explain the National Holidays, discussing with students some of the things which cannot be done on these days - change of address, new driver's license, check of bank balance (unless they have a bank card that works in a machine.)

4. Discuss some of the special days they celebrate.

5. Review days of the week and counting - also show written numbers.

6. Pantomime "closed" using classroom door.

7. Review "this", "that", "these", and "those".

8. Discuss the plural of party as opposed to the plural of horse. (parties - horses) When words end in "y", we usually take off the "y" and add "ies". Note that "holidays" is an exception.

Holidays

Holidays are special days that happen every year. They are days to remember or to have parties. In the United States, some holidays are called National Holidays. On these days, banks, schools, post offices and government offices are closed. There are seven of these each year. Some of these days are on Monday so people can have a small vacation. These days are:

January 1	New Year's Day
3rd Monday in February	Washington's Birthday
4th Monday in May	Memorial Day
July 4th	Independence Day
1st Monday in September	Labor Day
4th Thursday in November	Thanksgiving
December 25	Christmas

New Words

holiday	special	happen
remember	National	government
parties	vacation	closed

Jewish Holidays

Teacher's Suggestions

1. If your students are primarily Arabic, use this passage with care or not at all.
2. Discuss with the students the fact that the word "Jewish" refers to a religion and not an ethnic group.

3. Review numbers, both numeral and written form.

4. Discuss the closeness of timing for Easter - passover; Hannakkuh - Christmas. They occur at similar times, but there are few other parallels.

5. Discuss the plural form of child - children. Explain irregular plurals. Refer back to "parties" if you used that selection.

Jewish Holidays

Jewish Sabbath - The Jewish Sabbath begins at sunset on Friday and ends at sunset on Saturday.

Pesach (Passover) - Passover is a seven (7) day spring holiday. This holiday reminds Jews of the escape of their children from the Angel of Death. It is a time to remember the Jews' escape from Egypt.

Rosh Hashana - Rosh Hashana is in September or October and starts the Jewish new year. It also starts the ten days of penitence.

Yom Kippur - Yom Kippur is the holiest of Jewish holidays. It starts at sunset on the ninth (9th) day of Rosh Hashana. It ends at sunset on the tenth (10th) day of Rosh Hashana.

Sukkoth - Sukkoth is a harvest holiday and starts two (2) weeks after the start of Rosh Hashana.

Hannukkah - Hannukkah is the Feast of Lights. It is called this because candles are lit each night for eight (8) nights. One candle the first (1st) night, two (2) the second (2nd) night and on to eight (8). This is a gift-giving holiday in December.

New Words

Jewish	Sabbath	sunset
Passover	spring	reminds
escape	children	Angel
death	remember	Egypt
starts	penitence	holiest
harvest	feast	lights
candles	first	second
eight	gift	giving

New Year's Day

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Teach this holiday with Christmas if the semester break begins before Christmas and ends after New Year's.

2. Discuss other New Year customs and what time of year other new year's days occur.

3. Take newspaper clippings of Old Year and Baby New Year.

4. Bring in noise-makers and party favors to show.

5. Bring in a calendar and review the months and seasons.

6. Discuss the noise to be expected on this evening and the dangers of drinking and driving.

7. Teach word patterns "day" (bay, gay, hay, lay, may, nay, pay) and "it" (bit, fit, hit, lit, pit, sit, wit); have the students find samples in the reading.

8. Explain that "Auld Lang Syne" is an old, old song that means "lest old friends be forgotten". Bring a tape of the song and play for the students.

9. Ask the students if they make resolutions.

10. Ask the students if they think people keep these promises.

11. Ask the students if they remember a very good year.

New Year's Day

On New Year's Day you meet a friend or neighbor and say, "Happy New Year!" The friend answers, "The same to you and many of them!"

This holiday is found in many countries. It is a custom on New Year's Day for people to say they are going to be better people in the coming year. These promises are called resolutions.

The night before January first is called New Year's Eve. There are many parties, dances, and dinners. At midnight, there is much noise, everyone kisses and sings a song called "Auld Lang Syne."

People are glad to say "Goodbye" to the old year and "Hello" to the New Year.

New Words:

promises	resolutions	customs
better	eve	

Valentine's Day

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Show examples of a valentine, candy box, and a picture of Cupid. Mention that love is supposed to be from the heart and relate that to the shape of most valentine boxes.

2. Ask if Valentine's Day is in the first or second month of the year - review months of the year.

3. Discuss what people send on Valentine's Day.

4. Ask what the students would like to give on Valentine's Day? Talk about the thought being more important than the cost of the gifts given.

Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day means love. Valentine's Day is on February 14. People send cards or gifts to family and friends on this day.

Valentine cards are either pretty or funny. Gifts are often candy or flowers. There are parties at school. Each child is asked to bring a small valentine for everyone in the class. There are many parties and dances held on Valentine's Day.

New Words

gifts	either/or	means
cards		
often	family	everyone
friends		
love/like		

George Washington's Birthday

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Discuss National Holidays and the fact that some people are paid extra for working on these holidays.

2. Relate to the Fourth of July, which celebrates our country's birthday.

3. Compare "lie" and "true".

4. Patterns: -ing (Bing, ding, ping, ring, sing, wing): -ate (date, fate, gate, hate, Kate, late, mate, rate).

George Washington's Birthday

George Washington is called the Father of our country. He was the leader of our army during the war to be free. He was also the first president of our country from 1789 to 1797. At that time, there were only 13 states in the United States. George Washington died in 1799.

A story is told that when George Washington was a small boy, his father gave him a toy axe. His father found a tree cut down and said, "Who cut down my cherry tree?" George said, "Father, I cannot tell a lie. I cut down your tree with my little axe.". We don't know if this story is true.

His birthday is remembered on the 3rd Monday in February. Banks, post offices, schools, and many businesses are closed.

New Words

country	leader	army
war	father	toy
axe	tree	cut
cherry	lie	true

Saint Patrick's Day

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Ask students if they can name a hero.

2. Bring pictures of snakes. Ask if the students have seen snakes here. What do they do if they see a snake?

3. Bring a map; point out Ireland and islands.

4. Bring pictures of shamrocks and parades - in agricultural areas, the students may relate shamrocks to alfafa or clover.

5. Use snake to introduce beginning blend "sn": snap, snow, sneeze, sniff, snore, snuggle.

6. Teach endings: Ireland - Irish; England - English; Spain - Spanish and capitalization of countries and names of inhabitants.

7. To check comprehension, ask what day Saint Patrick's Day is.

8. Ask what color some people wear.

9. Ask students to name one food eaten this day.

Saint Patrick's Day

March 17 is Saint Patrick's Day. People from Ireland brought his holiday to the United States. This is the day Saint Patrick, an Irish hero, died. The Irish say he drove all of the snakes out of Ireland.

In part of the United States, there are parades this day. In New Mexico on Saint Patrick's Day, some people wear green or wear a shamrock. Foods eaten on this day are corned beef and cabbage.

New Words

Ireland	Irish	Spain
Spanish	England	English
St. - Saint	shamrock	islan

Cinco de Mayo

The Fifth of May

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Illustrate loans with a student - demonstrate verbs loan, borrow, pay.

2. Discuss what happens when a loan cannot be repaid.

3. Teach "ed" ending on verbs: marched, walked, wanted; irregular verb keep - kept.

4. Plan a menu for Cinco de Mayo from Mexican cookbook.

5. Show Mexico on a map and show where Puebla and Mexico City are in relation to the French march from the sea.

6. Ask students if they have celebrated an independence day, either here or elsewhere.

7. To check comprehension, ask what France wanted.

8. Ask who the president of Mexico was then.

9. Ask what the people in Mexico do on Cinco de Mayo.

Cinco de Mayo

The Fifth of May

In 1862, the government of Mexico had no money. President Benito Juarez did not pay back loans from France, England and Spain. The three countries sent soldiers to get the money. The soldiers of France wanted to take all of Mexico and they marched toward Mexico City.

On the Fifth of May, the Mexican fighters met the French at Puebla. The Mexicans won and sent the French away. This saved Mexico City.

Cinco de Mayo is a day of rest in Mexico. Families are home from work and children are home from school.

New Words

loans	soldiers	fighters
families	toward	march
marched	want	wanted
keep	kept	

Mother's Day

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Ask students why there is a special day for mothers.

2. Discuss in what ways love and respect are shown on Mother's Day.

3. Discuss what the students' mothers might like to do on Mother's Day.

4. Review verbs: show, send, bring, call, go, give, take.

Mother's Day

The second Sunday in May is Mother's Day. This is a day to show mothers how much they are loved. People away from home send flowers, cards or presents. Some people call their mother on the telephone. Some people take their mother to a restaurant or go on a picnic. Some people have a big family party. It is a time for families to all be together with their mother.

In Mexico, Mother's Day is always May 10th. December 8th is Mother's Day in Panama. In England, this day is to remember mothers who have died.

Words

second	time	May
restaurant	family	families
together	picnic	flowers
presents	telephone	

Memorial Day

Teacher's Suggestions

1. This can relate to the Day of the Dead in some countries. (See November 1 and 2). Discuss customs in those countries.

2. Bring a calendar to determine what date Memorial Day is on this year.

3. Review days of the week.

4. Pantomime can be used to get the idea "dead" across.

5. Review the term "national holiday" and the things that can and cannot be done on those days because of closed businesses or offices.

6. Students could, at this point in the class, write answers to the reading questions.

7. To check comprehension, ask when Memorial Day is.

8. Ask what the date for Memorial Day is this year.

9. Ask what people do for Memorial Day.

Memorial Day

In the United States, Memorial Day is a day for remembering the dead. People put flowers on graves and spend time remembering good things about the people who have died. Memorial Day is the last Monday in May and is a national holiday. Banks, government offices, schools and many stores are closed for this holiday.

New Words

United States	remember/remembering	
graves	dead	died
national	holiday	stores
government	offices	banks

Father's Day

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Information questions: review who, what, when, where, why and how.
2. Review pronouns he, she; him, her; they, them, their.
3. Discuss who this holiday is for.
4. Discuss why we have Father's Day?
5. Ask when we have Father's Day.
6. Ask what we do on Father's Day.
7. Discuss the irregular plural of person - people.

Father's Day

Father's Day is the third Sunday in June. Americans give cards and gifts to their fathers on this day. This holiday was started by Mrs. John Bruce Dodd in 1910. She wanted to thank her father for taking care of her. The father's favorite foods are cooked on this day. Some people do something special for their father on this day. The family does something the father likes to do.

New Words

third	holiday	Sunday
started	start	June
want	wanted	Americans
give	gave	favorite
special	cards	people
something		

Easter

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Take a calendar to class and show Good Friday and Easter.

2. Show pictures of rabbits, churches, lilies, and parade.

3. Bring some colored hard-boiled eggs.

4. Discuss opposites: old - new; Spring - Fall; city - country.

5. Discuss churches in general - what things happen in churches?

6. Discuss how people feel when the green starts coming back after winter.

7. Review seasons and talk about colors found in each season.

Easter

Easter is a very happy time. It is the day some people believe Christ, who died on Good Friday, rose from the dead. The churches are filled with flowers, mostly lilies. The people get dressed in new clothes.

Some children are told rabbits leave Easter eggs as gifts. The children hunt the colored eggs in an Easter egg hunt. There are Easter parades in many cities of the United States.

Easter comes in spring. Winter is over. Flowers are beginning to bloom. It is a time of joy.

New Words

Easter	people	believe
rose	children	rabbits
leave	gifts	cities
church	churches	flowers
clothes	beginning	begin
joy		

The Fourth of July

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Introduce irregular verb "to be": am, is, was, were.

2. Teach word patterns: fire, hire, wire, tire; be, me, he, we

3. Discuss other holidays that are similar: can refer to Cinco de Mayo and Diez y Seis de Septiembre.

4. Discuss safe use of fireworks.

5. Show pictures of flags of different contries.

The Fourth of July

The Fourth of July is the birthday of the United States. This is the day the people living here said they wanted to be free from England. This was 200 years ago - in 1776. This was the start of our Revolutionary War. George Washington led the army. In 1786, he became the first president.

July Fourth is our country's most important holiday. People shoot fireworks and watch parades. Many people go on picnics and eat hot dogs, hamburgers, and watermelon. They also fly the American flag.

New Words

shoot	fly	Revolutionary
War	watermelon	picnic
country	free	important
fireworks		

Labor Day

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Bring in a calendar and review seasons, months, and days of the week. Demonstrate week-ends. This review is particularly needed if this is a new semester.

2. Ask which season the students like best and why.

3. Show on the calendar how to count which is the first, second, third Mondays of the month. Teach this unless you have already done the "Holiday" passage.

4. Discuss what people do with a "small vacation". (paragraph two)

5. Ask the students if they can find the vocabulary words in the passage.

6. Word patterns: -in (bin, din, fin, gin, pin, sin, tin, win); -it (bit, fit, hit, lit, pit, sit, wit) Be prepared to define all you use.

Labor Day

Many people have a day off on Labor Day. Labor Day comes on the first Monday in September. This gives workers a long weekend. If you get Saturday, Sunday, and Monday off, this is called a three-day weekend. This is a long weekend.

There is no holiday between July Fourth and Thanksgiving. This was a good place to put Labor Day. Summer is over and the weather is still fine. People have picnics and parties. It gives workers a small vacation.

New Words

weekend	day off	vacation
come came	over	give gave
call	called	weather
have had	between	picnics

Diez y Seis de Septiembre

The Sixteenth of September

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Review writing numbers.

2. Explain "start" and "stop". A toy car can be used to demonstrate.

3. Review writing dates - September 16, 1910; July 4, 1776; and current date.

4. Introduce irregular verbs: tell; fight; make; ring.

5. Word patterns: -op (cop, hop, lop, mop, pop, top); -ad (dad, fad, gad, had, lad, mad, pad, sad).

Diez y Seis de Septiembre

The Sixteenth of September

Diez y Seis de Septiembre is the day Mexico told Spain they wanted to be free. A man named Don Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla started the fight. He rang a bell in the church in Dolores, Mexico. This started the eleven-year fight that made Mexico free. Don Hidalgo is called the father of Mexican Independence.

New Words

Diez y Seis de Septiembre		
The Sixteenth of September		
Mexico	Spain	free
told	fight	made
rang	named	started
called	father	Mexican
Independence		

Columbus Day

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Bring a map if a globe can't be found and show the "old world" and the "new world". Show where Columbus started from and where he stopped at the Bahamas. Show India where he thought he was.

2. Discuss the width of the Atlantic and the conditions on long ocean voyages then. There was no fresh fruit, which made their teeth loose and made them sick, there was no really fresh water, bugs often got into their flour and biscuits. Show a picture of an old ship and a picture of a new one.

3. Discuss the spelling of Columbus - the Spanish spelled it Colon.

4. Discuss maps and how they are made now and how they were made then. (pictures from airplanes as opposed to sailing or walking over the ground.

Columbus Day

Columbus Day is a day to remember the man who found America for Spain. Other people already knew about America. The man Christopher Columbus found the Bahama Islands in 1492. He would be surprised to know that he hadn't found India.

Columbus was looking for a short way to India. His ships were the Nina, the Pinta and the Santa Maria. The trip took a long time and they almost ran out of food. He made four trips to America before he died a poor man.

America was named for the man who first drew a map of the new place. His name was Amerigo Vespucci.

New Words

remember	found	America
Bahama Islands		surprised
know	hadn't	first
drew	map	place
ships	looking	short
India	trip	almost
ran out	four	trips
before	poor	

Halloween

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Show on a calendar the month and day of Halloween.

2. Discuss how we celebrate Halloween in the United States.

3. Discuss Dia de los Muertos if the students are aware of it.

4. Bring in pictures of witches, goblins, ghosts. Bring in mask(s) and costume(s), a package of Koolaid or a similar product.

5. Discuss safety for children that night - eat only candy wrapped or bought at a store, be careful of traffic, have luminous strips on costumes, and carry a flashlight.

6. Irregular verbs: eat, ate, eaten; comparatives: old, older, oldest; young, younger, youngest.

7. Word patterns: -ess (Bess, less, mess, dress, tress); -old (bold, cold, fold, gold, hold, mold, sold, told)

Halloween

Halloween is the evening before All Saint's Day on November first. On October 31st children dress in costumes. They wear masks and go from door to door saying, "trick or treat". People give them candy, cookies, or apples as a treat.

Many schools have parties at Halloween. They begin with a parade and prizes are given for the best costume, the funniest costume and the most original costume. After the parade, there is a party. The children play games and have cookies and Koolaid.

New Words

costumes	prizes	masks
give	gave	given
original	put	favorite
parties	parade	funniest
play	games	Koolaid

Dias de los Muertos

In Mexico "Dias de los Muertos" (Days of the Dead) are on November 1 and 2. All Saints' Day is for the "Angelitas", the children who have died. Some people put a favorite flower or toy on the grave for the child. Fireworks are lit so the spirit can find its way back.

The second day is for the older people who have died. Baskets of food are left for the dead to eat. At the end of two days when the ghosts have eaten all they want, the rest of the food is eaten by the living. On November 1, bakeries sell "pan de los muertos" (bread of the dead).

In the old days, there were bonfires to frighten away the ghosts and witches. Some people thought the bad sprits came back on All Hallows Eve.

New Words

witches	spirit	spirits
frighten	bonfires	during
bakeries	baskets	ghosts
found	find	thought

Veterans' Day

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Explain that states may celebrate the fourth Monday in October, but the Federal holiday is November 11.

2. Bring pictures of: gun, flag, soldiers, National Cemetary, people signing papers.

3. Discuss why soldiers are honored.

4. Show November on a calendar and count how many days until (or after) Veteran's Day, writing the numbers out. (one, two, etc.)

5. Show plurals: veterans; soldiers, countries, leaders, wars.

6. Explain contractions as the way people talk - let's being let us. "Don't" - "do not, can't - can not, I'll - I will.

7. Word Patterns: -en (Ben, den, hen, men, pen, ten, then); -all (ball, call, fall, hall, tall, wall)

Veterans' Day

Veterans' Day is November 11. This is the day World War I ended. Veterans' Day was called Armistice Day. What does Armistice mean? Soldiers from two countries are shooting each other. One day, the leaders say, "Let's stop shooting. Let's sign a paper to end the war." The two countries sign the paper and the fighting stops.

We signed the Armistice to stop fighting after World War I. Then we had Armistice Day. But later there was World War II, the Korean War and then Vietnam. So now we call this day Veterans' Day. We honor all soldiers who fought for the United States.

New Words

veterans	nearest	armistice
soldiers	countries	shooting
each other	leaders	sign
paper	war	stops
World War I	World War II	Korean War
Vietnam	honor	fought

Thanksgiving

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Ask when the Pilgrims came to America.
2. Ask how the Indians helped the Pilgrims.
3. Ask what they ate at the first Thanksgiving dinner.
4. Ask what we now eat at Thanksgiving.
5. Take pictures of Thanksgiving, turkey, birds, pumpkins, pies, and table decorations. Students love the paper honeycomb figures of pumpkins and turkeys.
6. Use calendar to show November, fall and Thanksgiving.
7. Discuss harvest festivals students might be familiar with.
8. Talk about the food at the first Thanksgiving. Much of the food was new to the Europeans - corn, pecans, pumpkins, turkey, tomatoes, potatoes.

Thanksgiving

In 1620 people called Pilgrims came to America. They wished to be free to pray as they wanted.

They had no houses and no food for the winter. Many people died. The Pilgrims made friends with the Indians. The Indians helped them in the winter. The Indians showed them how to grow food in the summer.

At the end of the first summer, they picked the vegetables. The men shot turkeys, geese, and ducks. They had a big dinner and 90 Indians came to eat dinner. The Pilgrims thanked God for his help. They thanked the Indians for their help. Then the Indians shot 5 deer and gave them to the Pilgrims to say thank you for the dinner.

Many years later Thanksgiving became a holiday all over the United States. Today we have big dinners. We eat turkey, vegetables, pies and other good food.

New Words

Pilgrims	wish	want
pray	winter	summer
picked	vegetables	shot
shoot	grew	grow
die	died	turkey
turkeys	goose	ducks
become	became	deer
help		

Matching

a. The Pilgrims came to	1. turkeys.
b. The men shot	2. a party.
c. The Pilgrims had	3. five deer.
d. The Indians shot	4. thanked God.
e. The Pilgrims	5. America.

Christmas

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Using a map, compare weather in the north and south of the United States at different times of the year.

2. Take pictures of Santa Claus, Christmas tree, sleigh, manger scene, and Christmas stocking. It's much easier to show these items than describe them.

3. Take Christmas cards: cute, religious, and Southwestern.

4. Take a bag with sand in it and a candle. Show how to make a luminario. Discuss the luminario displays students have seen.

5. Discuss the Christmas displays in front of houses and in windows the students have seen.

6. Teach New Year's Day either with this holiday or soon after if the semester break begins before Christmas and ends after New Year's.

7. Use "ch" to illustrate blends and discuss other initial blends such as "bl", "cl", cr. If the class speaks Spanish as the first language, many of them will pronounce "ch" as "sh".

Christmas

Christmas is December 25. Christians say this is the day Christ was born. They go to church to give thanks for Christ. People are happy and give presents and food to other people. Christmas cards are sent to friends and family to wish them "Merry Christmas and Happy New Year".

Schools have parties before Christmas.

In many homes children hang stockings the night before Christmas for Santa Claus to fill. People put presents under a Christmas tree that has pretty lights and other decorations.

People expect different weather at Christmas. They also eat different foods in different places. In the North people expect snow for Christmas. Many people in the South have never seen snow.

Some Christmas dinners have turkey, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie. Others have ham, goose, or a favorite family dish. It is a special family dinner, so the family picks the food.

New Words

Christmas	Christians	Christ
church	presents	stockings
lights	decorations	weather
different	North	South
snow	dinners	turkey
cranberry sauce		pumpkin
goose	pick	

Glossary

for

Advanced Beginning and Intermediate

Reading Selections on Holidays

A

almost - very nearly, close.
America - The continent the United States is in.
America - The United States of America.
Americans - people who live in the United States.
armistice - end of a war by agreement between countries.
army - a group of men trained for war or defense of country.
axe - a cutting tool with a sharp edge and a long handle, used to cut wood.

B

Bahama Islands - Islands to the east of the United States, place Christopher Columbus first visited in the Americas.
bakeries - places where baked goods are made and sold (pies, bread, rolls, donuts).
baskets - containers of straw to hold dry things such as vegetables, fruit, bread,.
become and became - present and past tense of: to come to be.
before - in front of, ahead of.
begin and beginning - start and starting.
believe - think is true, trust or have faith.
better - in a more excellent manner; good, better, best.
between - in the middle of, shared evenly two or more ways.
bonfire - a large fire in an open place for celebration or entertainment.
books - written or printed pages put together as one.

C

call and called - present and past tense: use the telephone, or cry out in a loud voice.
cards - pieces of stiff paper with writing and pictures on them.
cherry - small red fruit that grows on trees.
children - plural of child, boys and girls, babies.
Christ - the prophet that Christmas and Christian is named for.
Christian - believer in the teachings of Christ.
Christmas - Christian holiday, celebration of the birth of Christ.
Christmas tree - an evergreen tree decorated for Christmas with balls and lights.
church - a building where people pray.
cities - large towns, where a lot of people live and work.

clothes - everything you wear.
closed - shut, not open.
corned beef - salted meat from a cow.
costumes - clothes children wear to look like something else.
come - came - present and past tense: to move toward something.
country - a large piece of land with the same laws and rulers.
The place where a person is born is their country.
cranberry sauce - a red tart jelly made from small berries.
custom - ways groups of people do things, the way families keep holidays - what they eat and do on holidays.
cut - slice, divide using a sharp knife or saw.

D

day off - a day you don't have to work at a job.
Day of the Dead - time to remember those who have died.
dead - not living, "passed away",
deer - wild animal with large horns or antlers
died - stopped living.
drew - past tense of draw, sketch, make a picture.
ducks - swimming birds with webbed feet.
during - throughout, while.

E

either . . or - giving a choice: either black or white; either meat or cheese.
England - an island country off the west coast of Europe.
English - language spoken first by the people of England, or a group name meaning the people of England.
eve - the night before an important event like a holiday.
everyone - all people, each person.

F

family - mother, father, and children,you can call grandparents, counsins, aunts and uncles family also.
father - male parent.
Father's Day - day to honor fathers.
favorite - a person or thing liked better than others.
fight and fought - present and past tense: to have a battle, hit or shoot at other people.
fighter - one who fights, one who hits or shoots at another.
find and found - present and past tense: discover.
fireworks - paper wrapped around gunpowder used to make a loud noise and lights.
first - before all others.
flowers - the bright colored part of plants that bees like.
fly - to move through the air, usually using an airplane.
four - the written number 4; 3 + 1, 2 + 2.
free - being able to do what you want as long as it doesn't hurt others, not a slave or a prisoner.
friends - favorite people who are not family.
funniest - correct form of "most funny", comical or amusing.

G

games - contests, pastimes or activities. Something done because it is fun.
gifts - something given, presents.
ghosts - spirits, souls of dead people.
give and gave - present and past tense of: to make a present of, to hand over to someone else.
glue - paste, something to stick things together.
goose - a large water bird with webbed feet.
government - the laws and people who enforce those laws in a country. In the United States, all the people vote for the people who make the laws, and laws can be changed by a large number of people.
graves - placed to bury a body.
grow and grew - present and past tense - get larger, or to help to get larger (I grew watermelons last year.)

H

happen - to take place.
have and had - present and past tense of: to own or possess.
hadn't - had not, did not.
help - to aid or assist.
hero - a brave man who did something special.
holiday - a day to celebrate or remember; a day off from work set by the government.
honor - pay respect, to give fame or glory.

I

important - something that matters.
independence - freedom, stand alone.
India - a large country in southern Asia.
Ireland - a large island west of the British Isles.
Irish - people who live in Ireland.
island - a piece of land surrounded by water.

J

joy - happiness and pleasure.
June - Sixth (6th) month of the year.

K

keep and kept - present and past tense of: to hold.
Kool Aid - a sweet drink made from a package.
know - understand
Korean War - a war between north and south Korea which began in 1950.

L

Labor Day - a holiday in honor of workers and their work.
leader - one who shows the way, one who tells others what to do.
leave - to go away.
lie - to say something that is not true; something that is not true.

lights - things that shine in the dark such as candles or electric bulbs.
like - enjoy, want, choose. Also the same as (A pen is like a pencil because they both write.)
loans - money given to someone for a short or long time - it has to be given back.
looking - using your eyes to find something.
love - a feeling of great liking and respect.

M

map - a drawing that shows where lakes, rivers, mountains and roads are.
March - third (3rd) month of the year.
masks - covers for the face to make people look like something else.
may - might or can.
made - past tense of make: prepared or put together.
means - almost the same as.
Mexico - a country south of the United States - Estados Unidos de Mexico.
Mother's Day - a day to remember and honor mothers.

N

named - past tense of name: called, word to mean that person, date or thing.
National - referring to a whole nation: all of the United States.
nearest - closest.
North - a direction or that part of a country.

O

often - many times.
original - the first, new, or fresh..
over - above, on top of.

P

parade - people walking and decorated cars driving through the streets of a town.
paper - a piece, sheet, or leaf of thin stuff to write on.
parties - a group of people drinking, laughing, and having fun. Most often to honor an event like a holiday or wedding.
people - plural of person: men, women, and children in a group.
pick and picked - present and past tense of choose or select.
picnic - a meal eaten outdoors. Jokes are made that ants and sand have to be there.
Pilgrims - English people who came to America in 1620.
place - a particular spot or area.
poor - having no money.
pray - to say prayers.
play - to take part in a game.
presents - gifts, give things to people you like.
prizes - rewards or presents for doing something special.

promises - to say you will do something. To say you will not do something (like smoke).
pumpkin - a large yellow-orange fruit that grows on a vine.
put - place.

R

rabbits - small animals with large ears.
rang - past tense of ring: made a sound like a bell.
ran out - to go fast out of a place or not have any more.
remember and remembering - think of again.
resolutions - promises you make to yourself.
restaurant - a place to buy and eat food.
Revolultionary War - The American war to free the 13 colonies from England.
rose - a flower, or past tense of rise - to go up.

S

second - in counting it means the next after one, the next after first (first, second).
shamrock - a green plant like clover or alfafa.
ships - large boats.
shoot and shot - present and past tense: to fire a gun.
short - small, not tall.
sign - printed words which tell you something.
soldiers - people who are in an army, people who are taught to fight for their country.
something - a certain thing, opposite of nothing.
snow - cold white drops of water that are frozen.
south - a direction, the opposite of north. The part of the United States that is next to the Gulf of Mexico and Mexico.
Spain - a country in Europe.
Spanish - The language first spoken in Spain; the people of Spain.
special - A day or thing that you like very much; a day or thing that you remember for good things.
spirit - a ghost.
St. or Saint - a very holy person in Christian churches.
start and started - present and past tense; begin and began.
stockings - covers for foot and leg.
stops - ends, will not go any more.
stores - shops to buy things.
Summer - warm season of the year; when it's hot.
Sunday - the first day of the week; the day some people go to church.
surprise and surprised - present and past tense; something you didn't think would happen.

T

telephone - a thing that lets you talk to people in other places; to call someone on a telephone.
tell and told - present and past tense: say and said.

third - in counting, the next after two or second (first, second, third).
time - seconds, minutes, days, weeks, months, years.
together - nearly in the same place.
toward - in the direction of.
toy - game or thing for children to play with.
tree - a large plant with leaves growing from wood.
trips - plural: going somewhere, journeys
true - real, not a lie.
turkey - large bird with a small head. We eat it.

U

United States - the country you are in.

V

vacation - time off from work or school.
Valentine - a card sent to someone you really like.
vegetables - plants that can be eaten.
veterans - people who have been in the army, air force or navy.
Vietnam - a country in Southeast Asia.

W

want and wanted - present and past tense: have need of, would like to have.
war - fight between states or countries.
watermelon - a large, long green fruit that is red inside.
weather - how it is outside; wet, dry, cold, or hot.
weekend - end of the week; Saturday and Sunday.
winter - season between fall and spring; when it is coldest.
wish - want, hope will happen.
witches - people who think they can do bad things to other people without touching them.
words - sounds that mean a thing, person, or town.
World War I - War in Europe from 1914 to 1918.
World War II - War that started in 1939 and ended in 1945. Many countries were in this war.

Advanced Level

Reading Passages

and Teacher's Suggestions

Holidays

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Discuss with the students the different holidays celebrated in the United States. Many of them come from our history or from other countries (St. Patrick's Day, Cinco de Mayo, Diez y Seis de Septiembre).

2. Discuss National Holidays as official holidays on which banks, post offices, government offices, and many businesses are closed.

3. Remind students of how to find the first, second, third, and fourth Mondays. Use a calendar to show these and the fourth Thursday in November.

4. If the students celebrate birthdays, put these on the calendar so the students can be wished "Happy Birthday" during the year.

Holidays

Holidays are special days for a group of people or a country. People have parties and friends and families gather together to celebrate holidays for many reasons, as Americans have come from many countries.

In the United States, there are celebrations from our history, holidays borrowed from other countries and religious holidays. The holidays to remember something that happened in American history are Washington's Birthday, Columbus Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, and Veterans' Day. American holidays borrowed from other countries are Saint Patrick's Day, Cinco de Mayo, Diez y Seis de Septiembre and Halloween. Religious holidays are Passover, Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Sukkoth, Hannukkah, Easter, and Christmas.

Seven of the holidays in the United States are days Congress has made national Holidays. Banks, post offices, government offices, and many businesses are closed on these days. The National Holidays are:

January 1	New Year's Day
3rd Monday in February	Washington's Birthday
4th Monday in May	Memorial Day
July Fourth	Independence Day
1st Monday in September	Labor Day
4th Thursday in November	Thanksgiving
December 25	Christmas

Vocabulary

gather	celebrate	celebrations
history	borrowed	religious
businesses	National Holidays	

Reading Questions

1. What are two kinds of American Holidays?

2. What things can't be done on National Holidays?

3. Why do we celebrate holidays from other countries?

Jewish Holidays

Teacher's Suggestions

1. If your students are primarily Arabic, use this passage carefully or not at all.

2. Discuss the fact that the word "Jewish" refers to a religion, not an ethnic group.

3. Discuss the fact that the first amendment of the United States Constitution guarantees religious freedom. This was very important to the people who founded the United States because the Pilgrims came to the United States for religious freedom.

Jewish Holidays

Jewish Sabbath - The Jewish Sabbath begins at sunset on Friday and ends at sunset on Saturday.

Pesach (Passover) - Passover is a seven-day spring celebration. This holiday is in remembrance of the escape of the oldest child of each household from the Angle of Death in Egypt. It is also in celebration of the escape from Egypt.

Rosh Hashana - Rosh Hashana is in September or October and is the beginning of a new year. This is the beginning of ten days of penitence.

Yom Kippur - Yom Kippur is the holiest of Jewish holidays. It starts at sunset on the ninth day of Rosh Hashana and ends on the tenth day of Rosh Hashana.

Sukkoth - Sukkoth is a harvest holiday and starts two weeks after the start of Rosh Hashana.

Hannukkah - Hannukkah is the Feast of Lights. It is called this because candles are lit each night for eight days. One candle is lit the first night, two the second night and on to eight. This is a gift-giving holiday in December.

New Year's Day

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Teach this holiday with Christmas if the semester break begins before Christmas and ends after New Year's Day

2. Give the students examples of resolutions for the coming year: lose weight, quit smoking, be nicer, don't lose your temper.

3. Discuss safety - particularly drinking and driving.

4. Discuss the melting-pot idea in relation to holidays in the United States - celebrations vary according to the cultural background(s) of households.

5. Discuss how the students celebrate New Year's, if they do and when.

6. Discuss possible resolutions students might make for the coming year.

7. Discuss the kind of weather to be expected in the area and in other parts of the country and world at that time of year.

8. Review "keep", "kept", and "keeping".

New Year's Day

New Year's Day, January 1, is celebrated as the beginning of a new year. The next 12 months will be remembered as one unit of time. Traditions are to have parties, to make resolutions, and to meet with old friends.

The parties on New Year's Eve are celebrated with friends to end an old year and begin a better one. At midnight, people kiss each other and make lots of noise to welcome in the New Year.

Resolutions are made for self-improvement. The resolutions are promises to change for the better during the next year. The changes can be for health, attitude, or to help other people. Many jokes are made because very few of these resolutions are kept.

A new tradition combines the old one of meeting with friends and a new one of watching parades and football games. Television has made local parades and football games national events.

In New Mexico, some traditional foods are ham, black-eyed peas, tamales, and posole.

Vocabulary

New year's Day	parades	national events	
celebration	celebrate	unit	resolutions
black-eyed peas	tamales	posole	welcome
traditions	combined	local	household
self-improvement	attitude	health	jokes

Reading Questions

1. When is New Year's Day celebrated in the United States?

2. What are some New Year's Day traditions?

3. Why is New Year's Day a time for celebration?

Valentine's Day

Teacher's Suggestions

1. If any of the students do not have courtship in their native countries, tread very carefully.

2. Keeping #1 in mind, discuss ways of showing affection and/or courtship.

3. If appropriate, consider discussing the effects businesses (flower shops, candy stores) have had on the celebration of some holidays.

4. Discuss which is more important, the value of the gift or the sentiment behind the giving.

5. Explain "influence" as either a noun or verb. (paragraph 2).

6. Explain the use of the hyphen between two adjectives which modify one noun: long-bladed grass, gold-tipped arrow, double-sided diskette.

7. Explain lead (metal) and the verbs lead/led and "put up".

Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day, February 14, is the American special day for romance. Sweethearts of all ages give each other cards, flowers, and candy on Valentine's Day. Hearts, flowers,, and cupids are displayed in stores and on cards and boxes.

Cupid is the ancient Roman god of Love. He was a chubby, blindfolded boy with wings. He carried a bow and arrows which he shot at people to influence love. He used gold-tipped arrows to make people fall in love and lead-tipped ones to repel it.

Candy boxes are usually heart-shaped and have flowers or pictures on them. Decorations vary from ornate to plain, with a few having cartoon characters on them.

Romantic or humorous sentiments are typical on the cards and small candy hearts. When parties are planned for children at school, every child is expected to bring a card for each student in the class. Red and pink decorations are put up and each child decorates a box for his or her "mail".

Vocabulary

romance	romantic	sweethearts	displayed
ancient	Roman	chubby	culture
blindfolded	custom	wings	supposed
represent	carried	influence	repel
humorous	sentiments	typical	decorations
lead			

Reading Questions

1. What symbols represent Valentine's Day?

2. Why should children take a card for each child in his or her class?

3. Who was Cupid supposed to be?

Washington's Birthday

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Point out that the President of the United States is still considered the Commander in Chief of our armed forces.

2. Discuss the first 10 amendments to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights and why they are called that.

3. Discuss capitalization - President of the United States as opposed to "We will elect a president for our club tomorrow. (specific title as opposed to a general noun.)

Washington's Birthday

George Washington is known as the Father of our country because he led the armies of the colonies and was the first president. He was a leader in war and in peace. His birthda is a National Holiday celebrated on the third Monday in February.

It is interesting that he fought with British soldiers against Indians before the War for American Independence. Washington was the leader of the armies of the colonies for nine years and led the colonies to victory. He served without pay the entire time he was Commander in Chief of the armies.

In 1789, Washington became the first President of the United States. He faced three problems. People were demanding that their civil rights be protected, and the first ten amendments to the Constitution were adopted in 1791. The government needed to be organized to lead the country, and Washington spent several years doing that. The last problem was getting money to pay the expenses of the new government. The Tariff Act of July 4, 1789, did this for a long time. The Tariff Act charged people if they brought things from other countries to sell in the United States.

George Washington refused to run for president for the third term and retired in 1797. He retired to his home, Mount Vernon, and died there in 1799.

Vocabulary

peace	victory	served	adopted
amendments	organized	expenses	government
refused	retired	tariff	

Reading Questions

1. What is a tariff?

2. Do you think George Washington would have been an interesting person to know? Why?

3. What were two of the problems Washington faced as President?

Saint Patrick's Day

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Discuss islands and how it might be possible for all the snakes to be driven from an island, but not from a larger body of land.

2. Discuss stories about favorite characters students might know - put them in a book for all the students to enjoy.

3. If the students ask about current Irish problems, explain that most of the Catholics are descendants of the original Irish and most of the Protestants are descendants of English conquerors. Both groups, after centuries, feel Ireland is their home. To make things more complicated, the English government sends soldiers there to enforce English laws. This causes much resentment and fighting.

4. Discuss the climate in Ireland - much rain with green fields and trees.

5. Review abbreviations such as St. for Saint; St. for street and how to tell the difference. (A name follows the St. for Saint and a name precedes St. for street: Main Street and Saint Patrick.) Other abbreviations: lb. for pound; oz. for ounce; in. or " for inch; ft. or ' for foot; yd. for yard. Try to stick with practical ones - limit the acronyms to those questioned by students (things like NOW; GED; ESL).

6. Review the irregular verbs make-made; will-would, tell-told, say-said, get-got, become-became, bring-brought, drive-drove.

7. Discuss the advertisements in the paper referring to St. Patrick's Day sales and green beer or whatever is sold in restaurants.

Saint Patrick's Day

Saint Patrick was a priest who brought Christianity to Ireland. Everyone loved him and there were many stories told about him. One story is that there were many snakes in Ireland until Saint Patrick drove them out. There was one old snake who wouldn't go. He was the very last one. Saint Patrick made a box and asked the snake to get in. The snake said, "Sure and it's too small." Saint Patrick said, "It's just your size, try it and see." The snake got in. Saint Patrick shut the box and threw the last snake in Ireland into the sea.

Saint Patrick's Day is the biggest and best holiday in Ireland.

When the Irish came to the United States, many people did not like them or want them here. They worked very hard and needed a day to be together. Saint Patrick's Day, March 17, became that day. At first it was just mass, Irish music, a shamrock, and wearing something green. Later there were parties. Now, decades later, there are big parties and people say, "Everyone's a little Irish on Saint Patrick's Day."

Vocabulary

Christianity	Priest	Ireland	Irish
until	sea	snake	mass
shamrock	shut	decades	

Reading Questions

1. What color do people wear on Saint Patrick's Day/

2. How do people celebrate Saint Patrick's Day?

3. Do you really think Saint Patrick tricked the last snake in Ireland?

Cinco de Mayo

The Fifth of May

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Bring a cookbook of Mexican recipes and discuss the agriculture of the country in relation to the foods.

2. Bring a map and show that the Spaniards landed from a ship and there was only one good route from the sea to Mexico City, and it goes through Puebla.

3. Show Mexico on the map and talk about the variety of climates in it - from desert in the north to rain forest in the central part.

4. Distinguish between "rained", "reigned", and "reined". (Water, kings, and horses.)

Cinco de Mayo

The Fifth of May

On May 5, 1862, the Mexican government had no money to pay its debts to France, England, and Spain. The three countries wanted their money, so they invaded Mexico get it. At this time, Napoleon III was ruler in France, and the French soldiers wanted to conquer Mexico for the glory of Napoleon and France. The French soldiers began their march from the sea to Mexico City.

On Cinco de Mayo, a small group of Mexican freedom fighters met the French at Puebla. These men fought the French and held Puebla and saved Mexico City. Much later, the French returned and defeated the Mexican soldiers. Napoleon had two Austrians, Maximillan and his wife, Carlota, crowned emperor and empress of Mexico. They reigned for only three years. Then Maximillan was executed and Benito Juarez became the president of the new Republic.

It is a day of rest from work and school. The favorite dishes are traditional Mexican dishes such as menudo, burritos, and tamales. There are fruit drinks (aguas frescas) and, for something stronger, sangria well chilled. This makes a festive party a little more festive.

Vocabulary

debts	conquer	invade	glory
freedom fighters	Napoleon	returned	withdrew
defeated	emperor	empress	traditional
features	collect	reigned	executed
menudo	burritos	tamales	sangria

Reading Questions

1. Who fought the French and won?

2. Where did they fight?

3. Who was crowned emperor of Mexico? What happened to him?

Mothers' Day

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Discuss the difference in most people's feelings about mothers and fathers - emphasize the roles each plays in the family.

2. Discuss the idea of giving mother only one day off.

3. Again, discuss the thought rather than the monetary value of gifts.

4. Teach suffixes: -tion (relaxation, relation); -ed added onto a word ending in "e" (deserved, reserved, loved)

Mothers' Day

The second Sunday in May is Mothers' Day. This day was established in 1914 to honor mothers in the United States. People felt that mothers deserved a special day on which to honor them. Cards, flowers, and gifts are given and mothers don't have to cook or clean. The father usually takes young children to help them pick a card or gift for mother. Most mothers feel that a "day off" with the family is the best gift. There are many advertisements and sales just before Mothers' Day. There are many families who make Mothers' Day a day of relaxation for mothers.

Vocabulary

deserve	deserving	deserved	feel/felt
sentiment	second	established	don't
choose	chose	chosen	relaxation
honor			

Reading Questions

1. In what ways do we show love and respect on Mothers' Day?

2. What do most mothers like as the best gift?

3. Why do we have a special day to honor mothers?

Memorial Day

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Ask students if they have a day to remember family and friends who have died.

2. Ask students what they do on that day.

3. Explain Confederate States of America in connection with the American Civil War.

4. Tell about Arlington National Cemetery and the Grave of the Unknown Soldier in the context of the war dead and this tomb as a way to honor all soldiers who have died for our country.

4. Explain the difference between small family cemeteries and large town cemeteries. (Caretakers versus family)

Memorial Day

Memorial Day is a day of remembrance for friends and relatives who have died. Families put flowers and plants on the graves of the people they want to remember. In some places, families also clear the area around the graves of weeds and trash. This holiday began as a day to remember men who died in wars. It is now celebrated as a day to remember all the dead.

Memorial Day is a National Holiday observed on the fourth Monday in May, which allows workers to have a three-day holiday. The date was September 30 in most states. In nine states in the southern part of the United States, the date is June third. June third is the birthday of Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederate States of America during the Civil War.

Vocabulary

remembrance	remember	relatives	clear
observed	allows	president	civil war

Reading Questions

1. What day of the week is the National Holiday?

2. Why have this holiday on a special Monday instead of a special date?

3. Why would southern states celebrate June third?

Fathers' Day

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Discuss why we should have a special day for fathers.

2. Discuss the difference between honor and respect. Honor may be shown for one action, such as saving a child from drowning. Respect is shown for a person - his or her way of life and values.

3. Discuss support: mental and physical.

4. Bring sample card(s) to show students. Discuss the fact that some are humorous, some sentimental, some neutral.

5. Discuss some of the ways Father's Day might be celebrated by students.

6. Emphasize thought over cost when discussing gifts.

Fathers' Day

People felt fathers deserved a day of thanks for everything they do. Mrs. John Bruce Dodd helped to establish this holiday in 1910. Fathers are thanked on this day for all the effort they make year-round to support their families. On this day, a special meal is prepared and the family does something the father enjoys doing. Cards, gifts, and special dinners are ways to show respect and love of fathers. These are ways to honor fathers.

Vocabulary

support	deserved	establish	enjoy
prepared	effort	respect	honor

Reading Questions

1. Who helped to establish this holiday? Why?

2. What makes this day special for fathers?

3. What would you like for a special dinner?

Easter

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Discuss why Easter isn't just a religious holiday.
2. Ask if students celebrate the beginning of spring and how.
3. Ask students why some people would buy all new clothes.
4. Bring in an Easter egg and pictures of baskets, Easter egg hunt, etc.
5. Bring in samples of pastel colors and relate them to spring colors.
6. Explain what the term hard-boiled means when applied to people.
7. Bring in other symbols - flags (New Mexico and United States), street signs with slashes across U-turns, hand held up for stop, etc.)
8. Discuss other celebrations of the beginning of spring and bring out how people feel in the spring after a long winter.
9. Review comparatives: -er and -est. (bigger, better: biggest, best)

Easter

Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday following the full mmoon on or after March 21st. This holiday is celebrated both as a Christian holiday and as the beginning of spring.

Some people start the Christian celebration with Lent. During the forty days of Lent they sacrifice something they enjoy to indicate a desire to be better Christians. Some of the things they stop doing are smoking and eating desserts and candy.

The Friday before Easter is called Good Friday. The original name may have been God's Friday. This is celebrated as the day Christ was crucified and buried. Good Friday is a national holiday in many Christian countries, but not in the United States.

Easter Sunday is celebrated as the day Christ rose from the grave. This is a joyous occasion and Christian churches have a large attendance on this day. People wear their nicest clothes and many women wear hats with flowers on them.

The Easter Bunny is the symbol of Easter as the celebration of the beginning of spring. It's a very colorful celebration with eggs, flowers, and clothing of pale spring colors. This part of Easter is just for children. The myth is that the Easter Bunny hides decorated eggs and candy in the grass and trees.

The eggs can be glass, plastic, candy or chicken eggs. They are colored and decorated with pictures of rabbits, chicks, and flowers. If the eggs are chicken eggs, they're hard-boiled, it isn't as messy if they're dropped.

If gifts are given to children, they are usually candy, chicks, baby rabbits, or ducks. The candy can be in the shapes of eggs or of baby animals or chicks. All of these represent spring and the new life beginning in plants and animals.

Traditional foods are ham and fresh vegetables with candy and boiled eggs for the children.

Vocabulary

full moon	usually	Christian	shapes
represent	Lent	joyous	occasion
symbol	decorated	hard-boiled	messy
attendance	myth	sacrifice	

Reading Questions

1. What happens during Lent?

2. How is Easter celebrated?

3. How do you think the myth about the Easter Bunny bringing eggs got started?

The Fourth of July

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Explain the significance of the stripes on the American flag.

2. Explain the significance of the stars on the American flag and show what happened when Alaska and Hawaii were made states. Some people may remember this.

3. Show pictures of people on American money - George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, etc. Review the writing system of American money.

4. Ask about similar holidays celebrated in other countries.

5. Discuss the Boston Tea Party.

6. Discuss the idea of taxation without representation.

7. Review collective nouns: people, family, group, crowd.

8. Review size adjectives: huge, large, king size, giant, economy size, small, tiny, wee. Include examples such as detergent boxes and their descriptions and the connotations in size words - a little person does not necessarily mean physical size. Big as compliment or insult.

9. Review "become-became", and "more-most".

The Fourth of July

The Fourth of July, 1776, was the day the original 13 colonies declared independence from England. The Declaration of Independence was written by Thomas Jefferson and signed by representatives from each of the colonies. George Washington was appointed as leader of the armies of the colonies.

The revolution was started because people who lived in the colonies objected to taxation without representation. The taxes were used in England and colonists had no voice in the use of the taxes. One of the ways they rebelled was called "The Boston Tea Party".

The Treaty of Paris, signed in 1783 officially ended the war, although the fighting had stopped two years earlier.

The Fourth of July is a national holiday and banks, schools, public offices, post offices, and most businesses are closed. People usually have picnics, shoot fireworks, and get together with family and friends. Many towns have huge firework displays and contests in running, jumping, sack-racing, and eating.

Vocabulary

original	colonies	declared	independence
representation	signed	appointed	leader
businesses	usually	displays	contests
write	wrote	written	originally

Reading Questions

1. How long ago did the colonies declare independence from England?

2. Why did they declare their independence?

3. What are some things to do on July Fourth?

Labor Day

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Ask what other outdoor holidays are.

2. Discuss what businesses are closed on National Holidays.

3. Discuss what kind of weather is expected on this holiday.

4. Talk about the differences in weather in different parts of the United States. Take a map or globe and show that it may be cold in some places on Labor Day.

5. Talk about National Parks - what they are for and why they were set aside. Yellowstone was the first one (the students may have heard about Jellystone on the cartoon Yogi Bear.) Also talk about the state parks and recreation areas near you.

6. Explain the differences between National Parks, National Monuments, and Wilderness Areas.
   A. A National Park has paved roads, camping facilities with hookups for trailers, and restaurants.
   B. A National Monument has paved roads, bathrooms, and perhaps a restaurant; it has no camping facilities.
   C. A Wilderness Area has few paved roads, primitive bathroom facilities and no place to hook up camping trailers.

7. On a state map show lakes, recreation areas, and the National Parks and National Monuments.

Labor Day

Labor Day is a day of rest from labor. It is the first Monday in September and gives workers a three-day holiday. The carpenter's union started this holiday. It is in September because there are few other holidays at that time of year. It makes a nice break between the Fourth of July and Thanksgiving. It's considered the last outdoor holiday before the weather gets too cold. People go on picnics or go camping and barbecue hot dogs and hamburgers. Lakes and rivers are favorite places to go on Labor Day, so those places are very crowded all three days. Many National Parks in the United States close for the winter the next week. The most famous National Park in our area is Carlsbad Caverns. It is in the eastern part of New Mexico.

Vocabulary

labor	break	outdoor	union
barbecue	crowded	weather	camping
carpenter	few		

Reading Questions

1. Why is Labor Day always on Monday?

2. Why is this holiday in September?

3. Why do many National Parks close that week?

The Sixteenth of September

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Relate to July Fourth in the United States - both holidays celebrate the beginning of a fight for independence from European rule.

2. Discuss the European invasion of the New World and the attitudes of the Europeans toward the Indians. The Spaniards took land, gold, and slaves from the New World. The population of Tenochtitlan (Mexico City) was reduced 90% in ten years.

3. Review the written forms of numbers, particularly when related to checks. Practice on reading pay checks and writing checks.

4. Point out the spelling of "sign".

5. Discuss the fact that the revolutionaries had very primitive weapons as compared to the Spaniards they were fighting. Fighting on foot with spears, bows and arrows against men on horses with guns.

Diez y Seis de Septiembre

Diez y Seis de Septiembre is celebrated as the beginning of an eleven-year war of independence for Mexico. The war began on September 16, 1810, when a priest, Don Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, rang the bells of the church at Dolores, Mexico. He shouted, "Long live our Lady of Guadalupe! Long live Independence! Down with bad government!" This is known as the "grito de Dolores" or the "cry of Dolores". Don Hidalgo had been trying to help the Indians of the area and had also joined a secret society planning to overthrow the Spaniards and make Mexico independent.

The people of Mexico had seen revolutions in the United States and France succeed and also wanted to be free of rule by Europeans. Don Hidalgo did not live to see the end of the war for independence because he was captured and killed. His idea lived on to inspire others. He is now known as the Father of Mexican Independence.

On August 24, 1821, the Treaty of Cordoba was signed by Spain and Mexico; the next month, on September 27, 1821, Mexico became independent of Spain. New Mexico was a province of Mexico at that time.

Vocabulary

overthrow	revolution	succeed	Europeans
independence	rule	signed	captured
know/ knew	life/ live	secret	society

Reading Questions

1. What was the "grito de Dolores"?

2. Who was the Father of Mexican independence?

3. What inspired the Mexican people to a revolution?

Columbus Day

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Take a world map if you cannot find a globe and show the students the old world, the new world, the Bahamas, and India. The continent that was discovered by Columbus was assumed to part of Asia.

2. Explain "island" and "coastline", show several on the map or globe.

3. Discuss the size of the world - is it really getting smaller or is the fact of rapid transportation and communication only making it seem that way?

4. Discuss the differences in the number of continents taught in schools - students may have been taught a different number of continents. We teach 7 - Africa, Asia, Antartic, Australia, Europe, North America, and South America.

5. Show the students the way dates are written with commas - both alone and within text.

6. Show pictures of old and new ships - talk about conditions on the old ships; diet, safety, sanitary conditions (or lack thereof).

7. Discuss the conquest of the New World by Spain, Portugal, France, and England. Discuss the languages used in different countries as the result of which European country conquered the areas. Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela - Spanish. Brazil - Portuguese. Bahamas, Guyana, United States, and part of Canada - English. Part of Canada, part of the United States (Maine, Louisiana, and along the Mississippi River) - French.

8. Teach suffixes showing membership in groups: New Mexican, American, Colombian, Brazilian, Chilean.

Columbus Day

Columbus Day, the Monday nearest October 12, is a holiday to commemorate an important person in United States history. Christopher Columbus was looking for a shorter, safer route to India, China, and Japan. In these areas, Europeans could get gold and spices. There was no refrigeration, so spices were used to preserve food, and were extremely valuable at the time. By sailing west from Spain, Columbus thought he could reach the Indies in less time. In August of 1492, Columbus sailed with 83 men and three ships; the Nina, the Pinta and the Santa Maria. On October 12, 1492, they sighted land, an island of what is now the Bahamas. In all, Columbus made four trips to the New World, but never realized he had found a new continent. He would be very surprised at the results of his voyages.

Though Columbus first recorded exploration of the Americas, the New World was not named until an Italian map maker, Amerigo Vespucci, mapped the coastline. That is why the continents are called the Americas instead of the Columbias. Columbus Day is celebrated in some states with parades.

Vocabulary

commemorate	history	event	recorded
route	preserve	refrigeration	extremely
realize	map maker	map	continent
coastline			

Reading Questions

1. What date do we celebrate Columbus Day this year?

2. What were the names of his ships?

3. Why would Columbus be surprised?

Veterans' Day

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Discuss the days and types of celebrations used in other countries to honor soldiers.

2. Explain that only Congress can declare war and the balance of power in the United States government (judicial, legislative, and executive branches).

3. Talk about the fact that the United States has been in wars/police actions since World War I. List the wars America has been in: American Revolution (1775 - 1783); War of 1812 (1812 - 1814); Mexican War (1846 - 1848); American Civil War (1861 - 1865); Spanish American War (1898); World War I (1914 - 1918); World War II (1941 - 1945). The actions in Korea and Vietnam were never officially declared as wars by Congress, they are called police actions.

4. Discuss why wars are fought - ideals, land, insult, greed?

5. Bring pictures of famous battles and talk about why some battles are famous and others aren't. (Most battles that begin or end wars are famous)

6. Talk about Arlington National Cemetery and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and why this was done.

7. Teach the plural possessive (veterans') and compare to the singular possessive (veteran's).

Halloween

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Discuss celebrations the students might be familar with in other countries.

2. Ask what is meant by "spirits". Discuss other terms for spirits: ghosts, ghouls, goblins, etc. Also mention the other definition of spirits - alcoholic drinks.

3. Bring in a jack-o-lantern or pumpkin, a mask, a costume and talk about what people can expect on Halloween from neighborhood children.

4. Discuss Halloween safety for children: eat only candy that is wrapped and bought in a store, wear costumes with luminous strips, carry a flashlight.

5. Bring in a map and show the British Isles - the areas the Celts lived. (Scotland, Wales and Ireland)

Halloween

Halloween is celebrated the evening of October 31st. It precedes the church festival of All Saints' Day on November 1. Halloween is celebrated with "trick or treating", masquerade parties, strange decorations, witch stories, and amusing games. It is an occasion of fun for children. Boys and girls put on costumes and masks to greet their neighbors with "Trick or treat!" Most people prefer to give candy, cookies or apples as a "treat" to having a "trick" played on them.

Halloween parties are popular. The place is decorated with figures of goblins, ghosts, and witches, and with jack-o-lanterns. Jack-o-lanterns are pumpkins carved with odd faces and lighted with candles inside. A traditional game is "bobbing" for apples that float in a tub of water; the apples must be picked up with the teeth without the use of hands.

Halloween started in Great Britain. An ancient people, the Celts, believed that on the evening of October 31, the lord of the dead called back many evil spirits. The people lit great bonfires to keep these evil spirits away.

Vocabulary

precede	festival	masquerade	witch
occasion	costumes	masks	prefer
attempt	figures	goblins	ghosts
pumpkin	carved	odd	bobbing
float	tub	ancient	Celts
evil	spirits	bonfire	

Reading Questions

1. When is Halloween?

2. How is Halloween observed in the United States?

3. What is a difference between All Saints' Day and Halloween?

All Saints' Day

All Saints' Day, a Christian holiday celebrated in many countries to commemorate all saints, known and unknown, is observed on November first. It is celebrated by the Roman Catholic, Anglican (Episcopal), some Protestant churches, and also by the Eastern Orthodox Church.

It is followed by All Souls' Day, another Roman Catholic Holy day which is a day of prayer for the dead who were good people. Some Anglican (Esiscopal) churches also observe the day.

In Mexico, November 1 is to remember the children who have died. Small toys or flowers are put on the graves and fireworks are lit to help the spirit find its way back. November 2 is for adults who have died. Baskets of food are left for the dead to eat.

Veterans' Day

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Discuss that fact that the date of Veteran's Day may be the fourth Monday in October in some states. The National Holiday is November 11.

2. Discuss the days and types of celebrations used in other countries to honor soldiers.

3. Explain that only Congress can declare war and the balance of power in the United States government (judicial, legislative, and executive branches).

4. Talk about the fact that the United States has been in wars/police actions since World War I. List the wars America has been in: American Revolution (1775 - 1783); War of 1812 (1812 - 1814); Mexican War (1846 - 1848); American Civil War (1861 - 1865); Spanish American War (1898); World War I (1914 - 1918); World War II (1941 - 1945). The actions in Korea and Vietnam were never officially declared as wars by Congress, they are called police actions.

5. Discuss why wars are fought - ideals, land, insult, greed?

6. Bring pictures of famous battles and talk about why some battles are famous and others aren't. (Most battles that begin or end wars are famous)

7. Talk about Arlington National Cemetery and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and why this was done.

8. Teach the plural possessive (veterans') and compare to the singular possessive (veteran's).

Veterans' Day

Veterans' Day was originally called Armistice Day. It was established to commemorate the end of the fighting in World War I, November 11, 1918. It was renamed Veterans' Day in 1954 to honor all United States veterans.

Several organizations of veterans honor living and dead American soldiers on this day. The American Legion, the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) are three of these organizations. Small paper flowers called poppys are given for donations to help soldiers who were injured fighting for this country. Living veterans include soldiers who fought in World War I, World War II, and the police actions in Korea and Vietnam.

Vocabulary

veteran	originally	armistice	establish
commemorate	honor	war	particular
Congress	cemetery	continue	organization

Reading Questions

1. What was the original name of Veterans' Day?

2. Why was the name changed?

3. Why should soldiers have a day honoring them?

Thanksgiving

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Bring pictures of Pilgrims and discuss (carefully) the idea of freedom. (religious, mental, and physical)

2. Bring pumpkins, sweet potatoes, and pecans and talk about the foods new to Europeans found in the Americas. (potatoes, tomatoes, corn, turkeys, pecans, coffee, and chocolate)

3. Discuss harvest festivals known to the students.

4. Discuss what the students do on Thanksgiving (watch parades on TV, watch football games, cook, nothing?)

5. What foods have the students heard of as traditional on Thanksgiving?

6. What are some of the things the people of the United States have to be thankful for?

7. Review writing names of cities and states - capitalization and commas.

8. Have popcorn during the break and enjoy!

Teacher's Suggestions for Menu

1. Discuss menus in general - what can be found on them: prices, names and descriptions of foods, beverages,, pictures of foods and beverages, desserts. Sample menus could be brought in to illustrate.

2. Tie in new foods found in New World to Thanksgiving Menu.

3. Discuss cooking methods - open fire, fireplace, nice modern stove. Talk about favorite foods of students - their own ideal menus for an occasion such as this.

4. Relate oyster shells to pecan, peanut, clam shells. Bring samples to show, particularly if any sea shells are available.

5. Show Plymouth on a map - ocean and woods available to Pilgrims for food gathering.

Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving, held on the fourth Thursday in November, is a National Holiday set aside for remembering the good things in our lives.

The original Thanksgiving was a feast held after the first harvest in the New World. In 1620, the Pilgrims landed in the new World at a place they named Plymouth, Massachusetts. The first year was very hard for these people. They received help from the Indians of the area, particularly the leader Massasoit, in learning how to survive. After the first harvest, the Pilgrims and the Indians feasted together. The Pilgrims were thankful for survival, friendship, and homes in a free land.

Today people have a wide variety of things for which they are thankful. The day is usually spent with family or close friends. Some traditional foods are turkey and dressing or ham or wild game such as venison or duck. Fresh vegetables are also eaten. Pumpkin, pecan, apple or sweet potato pies are favorite desserts.

Vocabulary

set aside	feast	harvest	Thanksgiving
received	Pilgrim	area	wild game
particularly	original	thankful	usually
friendship	close	variety	traditional
survive/survival	venison	dressing	stuffed

First Thanksgiving Menu

The occasion: The first Thanksgiving dinner in America
The location: Plymouth Colony, 1621
The hosts: The Pilgrims hosted Chief Massasoit and other Indians at a feast to thank God for the Pilgrims' survival.

The menu:

Venison stew cooked over an open fire
Roast wild turkey stuffed with corn bread
Oysters baked in their shells
Sweet corn
Pumpkin baked in a bag and flavored with maple syrup

Table Talk:

After the Pilgrims said thanks, they talked about the difficult year they had had. Then Chief Massasoit's brother disappeared into the woods and returned with a bushel of popped popcorn. This gave them much to talk about because they had never seen it before.

Vocabulary

menu	occasion	hosts	stew
turkey	roast	stuffed	oysters
shells	flavored	disappeared	popcorn
difficult			

Christmas

Teacher's Suggestions

1. Bring Christmas cards, luminarios, Nativity scene, Christmas tree or pictures of Christmas tree and Nativity scene.

2. Discuss the tradition of celebrating birthdays - some countries don't indulge in this.

3. Review addressing envelopes (include addressing to foreign countries) and amount of postage required.

4. Discuss what is meant by the "Spirit of Christmas" and what relation this has to people ringing bells in front of kettles around town.

5. Discuss Santa Claus, reindeer, stockings, and presents for children.

6. Ask what the students do at this time of year - get off work and what else?

7. Talk about Christmas customs from other countries if appropriate with the group involved.

Christmas

Christmas, December 25, is a holiday that combines ancient non-Christian and Christian customs. It is sometimes called Yule or Noel.

The religious holiday is the celebration of the day Christ was born. Christian churches all over the world hold special services to give thanks for the birth of Christ, although no one knows the actual date. There is a spirit of kindness and giving at this time of year whether people are Christian or not. One way people may show their thanks is to share food and toys with people who have less.

The United States and Canada have combined many European customs because of the wide variety of origins of their people. Christmas cards with friendly messages have been a popular custom since the first one was sent in 1843. Other non-religious customs include hanging stockings for Santa Claus to fill while on his trip to visit all of the children of the world and gaily decorating Christmas trees, yards and houses. There are also school pageants, Salvation Army bell-ringers, and Christmas Carol singers.

In New Mexico, many homes are decorated with luminarios, which are supposed to help Mary, Joseph and the child find a place where they are welcome.

Family members gather, give presents and eat and eat and eat. A traditional dinner might have turkey, cranberry sauce, sweet potatoes, fruit salad, and pumpkin pie.

Vocabulary

combine	ancient	customs	Yule
Noel	religious	services	whether - or
decorate	luminarios	supposed	variety
wide	origin	message	popular
since	include	stockings	gaily
pageants	"Salvation Army"		carol
gather	cranberry		

Reading Questions

1. When is Christmas?

2. Why do Christians celebrate?

3. Name some non-religious customs.

Glossary
for
Intermediate and Advanced
Holiday Reading Passages

A

allows - to let have, lets be, permits.
ancient - very, very old.
Anglo-Saxon - a member of the Germanic people living in England before 1066.
appointed - a job given by a group or person in power.
area - a part of the earth's surface, a certain general place.
armistice - an end of war by agreement between two countries.
attempt - to try to do, to try to get.
attendance - the people or number of people at a meeting, game or class.
attitude - a way of feeling or thinking, how you feel about something. (A good attitude or a bad attitude).

B

barbecue - cook foods outdoors, parties held while cooking outdoors.
become and became - present and past tense: to grow, to change, to happen.
black-eyed peas - the seeds of the cowpea, a vinelike plant. They look like beans with black eyes.
blindfolded - past tense: to have the eyes covered with cloth so it isn't possible to see.
bobbing - try to catch floating or hanging fruit with the teeth.
bonfire - a big fire built outdoors to celebrate.
break - an interval, a pause. An interruption such as an interruption in a journey or period of time. There are many meanings of this word, use the surrounding sentence to help with other usages.
burritos - plural: food wrapped in a flat flour bread. A burrito is eaten with the fingers like a sandwich.
businesses - plural: restaurants, stores, factories, places of work.

C

camping - time spent outdoors, sleeping and eating outdoors or in a tent or cabin or trailer.
captured - past tense: taken by force or surprise. Made a prisoner.
carol - a song of joy or praise, a Christmas song.
carpenter - a person who builds and repairs wooden articles or buildings.
carried - past tense: taken from one place to another.

carve - to make something by cutting (carve a face for a jack-o-lantern), or to cut into pieces for serving. (carve a turkey for Thanksgiving).
celebrate and celebration - verb and noun: observe a holiday or annniversary. Have a party!
Celts - plural: people who lived in central and western Europe a long, long time ago. They lived in what is now France and Great Britain.
cemetery - a place to bury the dead, a graveyard.
choose, chose, and chosen - present, past, and past participle: to pick out, select.
Christian - person who believes that Christ rose from the dead.
Christianity - The religion that believes Christ rose from the dead.
chubby - round and plump, usually refers to children.
Civil War - a war from 1861 to 1865 between the northern and southern states of the United States. (There were 23 northern states and 11 southern states involved).
clear - bright, light, easily seen through. To remove, to get rid of.
close - near, very near in interests or affection.
coastline - outline of where water meets land, the outline of a coast.
collect - bring together in one place.
colonies - plural: groups of people who move to a far land, but are told what to do by their native country.
combine and combined - present and past tense: to come or bring together, join.
commemorated - past tense: honored the memory of something by a celebration.
Congress - the part of the United States Government which makes the laws.
conquer - to get possession or control of another land and people by winning a war.
contests - plural: races or games which everyone who plays wants to win.
continent - any of the largest land masses of the earth (Africa, Antarctic, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, South America).
continue - to go on, to keep on.
costumes - plural: style of dress which people of a group or nationality have worn a long, long time; clothes children wear at Halloween which make them look like something else (cat, ghost, soldier).
cranberry - a firm, sour red berry that grows in bogs or marshes.
cranberry sauce - a jelly made from small red berries.
crowded - past tense: (was crowded, is crowded) A large number of people or things gathered closely together. Adjective: (a crowded place) A place with large numbers of people or things gathered closely together.
culture - the ideas, habits, skills, arts, and music of a group of people.

custom - a usual practice, or habit of people. The way things have been done before.

D

debts - plural: something owed by one person or group to another person or group.
declared - past tense: made clearly known, announced, said in definite words.
decorate and decorated - present and past tense: add something to make a room or tree more attractive or pretty.
decorations - plural: the things added to make something more attractive or pretty (balls and lights on trees, paint and new furniture in rooms).
defeated - past tense: overcome, beaten, conquered.
deserve, deserving, deserved - present, progressive, past: have a right to because of something done.
destructive - tear down, spoil, ruin.
difficult - hard to do, make or understand.
disappeared - past tense: gone out of sight, lost, vanished.
display and displayed - present and past tense: to set out a group of things to get attention, show off.
displays - plural: A group of things set out to get attention (The displays of candy is to sell candy).
don't - do not, a contraction of the words do and not.
dressing - bread and spices cooked inside meat such as a bird.

E

effort - use energy to get something done, try hard.
emperor - man who rules an empire (a large country or a group of countries.
empress - woman who is married to an emperor or rules a large country or group of countries.
enjoy - get pleasure or happiness from something.
establish and established - present and past tense: make firm, settle, set up.
Europeans - people who live in the countries of the continent of Europe.
event - happening, particular contest, or item.
evil - morally bad, wrong, causing pain or harm.
executed - past tense: put to death, killed.
extremely - very much, going to great lengths.

F

feast - noun: a meal of celebration. verb: eat a large meal.
feel and felt - present and past tense: touch or handle, sensitive to or emotionally affected by.
festival - a celebration, entertainment at a special time.
few - not many.
figures - plural: pictures, drawings, shapes of things.

figures - verb: adds, subtracts, finds out how to do.
flavored - adjective: means something has been added to a food or drink to make it taste good.
float - stay on the surface of liquid (water, root beer)
freedom fighters - people who fight to be free.
friendship - the feeling between people who like each other.
full moon - the times when the moon shows as a circle of light.

G

gaily - happily, joyously, brightly.
gather - bring together, collect.
ghosts - plural: the supposed spirits of dead people appearing as pale misty lights.
glory - great honor and admiration won by doing something important.
goblin - an evil or trouble-making ugly ghost.

H

hard-boiled - boiled until the inside is firm, no longer soft.
harvest - noun: the time of the year when crops are picked. verb: to pick crops. noun: the crops gathered at one time.
health - condition of a mind and body. (good or bad)
historical - having to do with things in the past.
hollowed-out - having all the insides gone with just the shell left.
honor - noun: high regard, great respect. verb: something done as a sign of respect.
hosts - plural: people who ask others into their home for music, food and drinks. verb: the action of giving music, food, and drinks to people who come to a party.
household - all of the people who live in one house or apartment.
humorous - funny, amusing, comical.

I

include - consider as a part of something.
independence - freedom from the control of others.
influence - power of persons or things to change how others act or feel.
invade - enter by force, to come as an enemy.
Ireland - an island country to the west of England and Europe.
Irish - people who live in or come from Ireland.

J

jokes - plural: funny stories, actions that make people laugh.
joyous - very happy, glad.

K

know, knew, and known - present, past, and past participle: understand, have met, be aware of.

L

labor - verb: work, manual work. plural noun: the people who work with their hands.
lead - noun: a heavy metal used for piping. It is poisonous to people and animals.
lead - present tense: to walk in front to show the way.
leader - a person who shows others the way to go, a person who tells others what to do.
Lent - the period of 40 days from Ash Wednesday to Easter for Christians.
life - the opposite of death, the ability to grow (plants, animals, fish).
live - how you spend your time in working, playing, and with family.
local - happens in only a small area.
luminarios - plural: bags with sand and small lighted candles in them. They are used to decorate for Christmas.

M

map - a drawing that shows where mountains, rivers, and roads are.
mapmaker - a person who makes drawings which show where mountains, rivers, and roads are.
mask - a covering for the face that makes the person look like someone or something else (cat, movie star).
masquerade - a party that people go to looking like someone or something else.
mass - a religious ceremony of the Roman Catholic Church.
menu - a list of food served at a meal, a list of food and prices at a restaurant.
menudo - tripe stew.
message - any passage of information by talking, writing, or signaling.
messy - disorderly, untidy, not neat.
much, more, and most - in comparing these mean greater in amount. A lot - much, a whole lot - more, the greatest amount - most.
myth - a story that has been told for years and years that explains something. (usually about a person who never really lived).

N

Napoleon - the emperor of France from 1804 to 1814.
national events - special activities that can be seen by anyone in the United States. Happenings that are of interest to most of the people in a country.
National Holiday - Days decided by Congress that schools, Post Offices, and government offices are closed.
New Year's Day - January 1, the first day of the year.
Noel - the French word for Christmas.

O

observed - past tense: celebrated or kept according to custom, paid special attention.
occasion - a special time or event, a happening.
odd - not usual or ordinary, not what you usually see.
origin - beginning.
original - first, earliest.
outdoor - open-air, not in a building.
overthrow - upset, to take over, or conquer.
oysters - soft living things that make shells to live in. People eat them.

P

pageants - a great show, big parade, with many floats and decorations.
parades - a march of people and decorated cars in a line through a town or city.
particular - adjective: of or belonging to a single person, group or thing. Unusual, special.
particularly - adverb: especially.
Pilgrim - a member of the English people who came to America in 1620 and started Plymouth Colony.
popcorn - a type of corn that bursts when heated, a snack.
popular - well liked by many people.
posole - a soup made with pork, hominy, and chile peppers.
pranks - plural: tricks, jokes.
precede - come before.
prefer - like one thing better than other things like it.
prepared - past tense: made ready, put together, made.
preserve - keep from harm, protect, save, keep from spoiling.
president - the highest office of a company, club, or country that elects the leaders.
priest - church leader, minister, clergyman.
pumpkin - large round yellow-orange fruit that grows on a vine.

R

rare - not common, unsual, better than most.
realize - understand fully or completely.
received - past tense: accepted, taken, gotten.
recorded - past tense: put in writing or put on a tape by a machine.
refrigeration - making or keeping cold or freezing to keep in good condition.
reigned - past tense: ruled, had royal power.
relatives - plural: people who have the same parents, grandparents, great-grandparents. People who have married into a family.
relaxation - a rest from work, recreation, what people do for fun.
religious - concerned with beliefs in a supreme being or supernatural beings who control lives.
remember - to think of something that happened in the past.
remembrance - the action of thinking of something that happened in the past.
repel - to drive back, to send away, hold off.
represent - to stand in for, to act or stand in place of.
representation - the act of talking for a group, speaking to a leader for others.
resolutions - plural: promises made to yourself, decisions about what you will do in the future.
respect - feel or show honor for, consider or treat with courtesy, show regard.
returned - past tense: came back, gave back.
revolution - the act of trying to replace a government with another by war.
roast - cook in an oven with little liquid, a cut of meat that is cooked this way.
Roman - a person who lives or lived in Rome.
romance and romantic - verb and adjective: having a lot to do with love.
route - road to be taken in going from one place to another.
rule - control of a country, a statement of control.

S

sacrifice - give up something important to show something else is more important.
Salvation Army - a group of people who help others who don't have jobs, food, or a place to live. They are a religious group.
sangria - wine with fruit juice mixed in.
sea - a very large body of salt water.
second - in counting the next after first (first, second)
secret - something very few people know. A joke is told that only one person can keep a secret.

self-improvement - making yourself better in health, skills, or mind.
sentiments - plural: feelings and opinions which help you decide what to do.
services - plural: work done, duty performed for others. Religious ceremonies.
set aside - to put part of something away, to save part of something. (Put aside part of your pay to buy something you want).
Shamrock - a green plant that looks like clover or alfafa.
shapes - forms or outlines of people or things.
shells - hard outer covering of an animal, an egg, a fruit, or a seed.
shut - close, opposite of open.
signed - past tense: names written by people about a decision talked about on the paper.
since - from then until now.
snake - any of the reptiles without legs, a reptile with a long scaly body.
society - group of people living in the same place who have the same language and rules.
spirits - plural - supernatural beings, ghosts, souls of the dead.
stew - a soupy mixture of meat and vegetables.
stockings - knitted coverings for the legs and feet.
stuffed - filled to overflowing, have too much for the room available.
stuffing - a mixture of bread and spices put inside meat and cooked with the meat.
succeed - accomplish, do something hard the right way.
support - carry the weight of, keep from falling. Provide money for food, clothes, and rent.
supposed - past tense: thought was true without knowing, imagined.
survive - stay alive, continue to live.
survival - succeed at staying alive, continuing to live.
sweethearts - people in love.
symbol - something that stands for another thing. (Our flag represents our country where ever it is seen).

T

tamales - a corn paste wrapped around meat and chile peppers.
thankful - full of thanks, feel grateful, appreciate.
Thanksgiving - the fourth (4th) Thursday in November. A day Americans give thanks for their freedom and way of life.
traditions and traditional - plural noun and adjective: stories, beliefs, customs kept for many, many years by a group of people.
tub - a large open container for liquids (water).
turkey - a large bird with a small head eaten at Thanksgiving and Christmas by many people.

typical - common to a group, an example of the way a group does something.

U

union - a large number of people who form a group to make life better for working men and women.
unit - a single distinct part or object, one of something.
until - up to the time of.
usually - commonly, generally, how things happen most of the time.

V

variety - different kinds of a thing, several different kinds.
venison - the meat of a deer.
veteran - a person who has been in the army, navy, or air force.

W

war - armed battles between countries. Fights between the armies of countries or groups.
weather - how cold or hot, wet or dry a place is.
welcome - verb: make a person feel they are wanted in a place they visit. noun: the action of making a person feel wanted in a place they are visiting.
whether . . or - used before choices (whether you want to go or stay).
wide - covering a large area.
wild game - animals and birds that do not live in a pen or on a farm. Animals or birds that are hunted for fun.
wings - plural: The parts of birds that would be arms on people. The arms of a bird or bug that they use to fly.
witch - a woman who believes she can hurt other people without touching them. An ugly, angry old woman.
withdrew - past tense: took back, moved back, retreated.
write, wrote, written - present, past, and past participle tense: use a pen or pencil to tell people something.

Y

Yule - the Anglo-Saxon word for Christmas.

Films Available from the

State Library

In order to take full advantage of all the films available from the state library, ask your librarian for the catalog. In order to order films, write and request an application form; include a self addressed envelope. The address is:

Media center
State Library
325 Don Gasper Street
Santa Fe, NM 82503

Request the film no more than three months and no less than 2 weeks of the date you need it, keeping in mind that these are seasonal films and will be popular at the time you need them. The film has to be returned 1 day after use.

Teacher's Suggestions

Introduce the topic with the suggestions and passage for that holiday. After you show the film, ask a variety of questions such as:

1. Opinions of film
2. Recall - how much is remembered.
3. Comparison to other stories
4. Perspective in relation to student's celebrations
5. Judgement of material presented as well as form of presentation.

Fourth of July

Happy Birthday U.S.A. - 11 minutes. Covers Columbus to 13 colonies, Declaration of Independence. Bicentennial era film.

Day of the Dead

Day of the Dead - 15 minutes. An excellent production describing the Mexican Festival of the Day of the Dead. Pictures, photos, and guitar music are included.

Christmas

Los Posados - 7 minutes. A colorful animated film of a Christmas celebration in a Mexican village. Jose Feliciano sings the songs of Posada. There in so narration. All of the songs are sung in Spanish.

END

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